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Barnhill, John Basil

How the goldites rob the
farmer!

[S.I.]

[1896?]

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HOW THE GOLDITES ROB THE FARMER!

How this year's Wheatcrop

is being sacrificed

ON THE

Altar of Gold to produce an

Artificial Surplus of the

Yellow Metal,

and to defeat BRYAN !!

"Now is the Day of Salvation."

1896

JOHN B. BARNHILL, late Editor of "Flora (Illinois) Democrat," furnishes us from London with particulars of a remarkable interview with Mr. J. H. HOWELL, President of the Bristol (England) Bimetallic League, author of several popular pamphlets on Bimetallism, and an Active Currency Reformer.

The following conversation ensued :—

Question—You are, I believe, an International Bimetallist ?

MR. HOWELL—Yes, I have been one for a dozen years.

Question—You are the author of two pamphlets which have had a very large circulation, I am told ?

MR. HOWELL—Yes, one has gone through 8 editions ; the other, specially addressed to the working classes, has been printed in hundreds of thousands, many of which are in circulation in the United States.

Question—What is the cause of so large a circulation ?

MR. HOWELL—Merely, I suppose, that they put in a simple way, easily understood by the plain business man, or the "man in the street," a question vitally affecting every white man and woman in the civilized world, but which has been generally beclouded and befogged with technicalities and confusing side issues.

Question—Who are the principal supporters of Bimetallism in England ?

MR. HOWELL—*The working classes, undoubtedly. They realise that the yellow man with the cheap white money will strangle them in their industrial competition, if silver is not remonetised in the West. Our hope is in the masses, in enfranchised labor.*

Question—Being an international Bimetallist, do you favour Bryan's candidature ?

MR. HOWELL—I am an earnest supporter of Bryan. I believe he is a "Man of Destiny," and that it is his great and glorious mission to emancipate struggling and wronged humanity from the crushing tyranny of the Gold Standard. *His election will compel England to fall in with an International agreement, but his defeat, which I do not contemplate, will postpone it for a generation—a period of untold misery for the wage earner and producer.*

Question—What, in your opinion, will Continental nations do, in the event of his election ?

MR. HOWELL—They will gladly join in restoring silver to its old position as the money of redemption, by re-opening their mints to its free coinage at the old ratio. No well-informed man doubts it.

Question—Could these nations act without England's co-operation ?

MR. HOWELL—Undoubtedly. They, with the United States, could maintain the parity with ease and certainty, in spite of England holding aloof.

Question—What would England do with respect to the Indian Mints ?

MR. HOWELL—England is pledged, doubly pledged, by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Balfour in the House of Commons, to re-open the Indian Mints, if other nations open theirs, in spite of Lombard Street and the Gold Bugs, who will raise heaven and earth to prevent it.

Question—Would Lombard Street have much influence, think you ?

MR. HOWELL—Yes ; but the Bimetallists in the Cabinet are its strongest and ablest members, and even at the cost of breaking up the Cabinet, and shunting the few ignorant Gold Bugs in it, I am convinced Mr. Balfour's pledge will be redeemed to the letter. *But everything depends on the United States. If it grasps the nettle resolutely and boldly, England and Europe will follow. The Old World is very conservative in money matters, and, like all old organisms, is timid. The United States is young and vigorous, with a grand future. It can do and dare greatly. The hour has struck, the man has appeared, and victory is assured if the nation is true to itself, and is determined to work out its own salvation. If it fails in this supreme crisis, King Gold will grind it to powder, for of all the merciless tyrants the world has ever seen, the money power is the most merciless and remorseless. A few money kings in Europe and the States will hold the world in pawn, if the United States does not rise and throw off its shackles now. "Now is the accepted time—now is the day of salvation."*

Question—You have, I think, studied the Wheat question for some years, have you not ? What, in your opinion, is the cause of the present anomalous position with regard to American and Russian Wheat ?

MR. HOWELL—Those who so persistently claim that there is Gold enough for all, might learn a good deal from the events of the last few weeks. The Harvest Year 1896-7 opened on the 1st of August, in a more favorable position for the sellers of wheat than had been the case for years. The great reserves which had weighed down prices for three years had disappeared. The granaries of Europe and America had no more than a reasonable stock from which to draw. The crop of Russia was known in early August to be very deficient, and by the middle of September it was credibly reported that it was no more than 210 million bushels. The United States crop was also known to be very poor, and the official report told the world it was under 300 million bushels. The two great exporting nations had thus considerable deficiencies. *No wheat was available from India or Australia, in fact India is to-day buying U.S. wheat for delivery in Kurrach.* It was between seasons in Argentina, and nothing could come forward from there till January. The crops of Germany, France, and England were a poor average.

All this meant, in the natural course of things, considerably higher prices. *Russia, knowing this, was content to wait*, notwithstanding her ports would be ice-bound by the middle of November. Her shippers held back for higher prices. *Did the United States do the same? No.* Not only was there no attempt to reap the benefit which belonged to the farmer by right of the law of supply and demand, but the wheat was rushed forward helter-skelter, and *thrown at the English buyers for what it would fetch.* Freight were engaged weeks ahead, and vessels loaded deep were sent over in quick succession, their cargoes dumped out, and they rushed back in ballast to bring over more. While this was going on one Russian seller that I know of, seeing he had made a mistake, paid his English buyer \$8,000 to cancel the sale of a cargo and he made money by it afterwards. *The people in the grain trade in England were amazed at the wanton sacrifice.* "If Chicago will wait, will make a concerted upward movement, we can put wheat up \$20 a bushel," they said; but Chicago and New York continued to ship wheat for what it would fetch. "It was the financial position" they said.

Now what does this mean? It means that the great capitalists—the monied interests—the Banks and the Railroads wished to impose upon the people of the United States a sense of security and comfort by showing a solid gold reserve in the Treasury and a big river of gold flowing across the Atlantic. It would prove that there was plenty of gold—it would help Mr. McKinley's election.

So the Banks went through the little operation known as "putting on pressure"—the people were called on for their debts—they must pay at once.

Simultaneously the Railways reduced freights to the sea-board, and this the movement was forced. The poor farmer could not hold. His wheat was forced out of his hands as fast as it could be threshed, by the inexorable power of the financier; and so the Country is made happy by perceiving a big balance of trade in its favour—and the farmer is robbed of a vast sum which would rightfully and certainly have been his could he have held on a little while—only a little while—for England was bound to buy his wheat or starve.

This is the object lesson given to the Farmer by the Financier, who has the audacity to assert that their interests are identical.

Under such circumstances I shall be very much surprised to hear that the farmers, the back-bone of the American nation, will not seize the present opportunity to emancipate themselves from their tormentors.

I should think they are shrewd enough to vote in favour of their own interests, and these undoubtedly are bound up with Bryan and Free Silver.

J. B. BYRNHILL, a

Late Editor of the *Flora* (Illinois) Democrat,

Oct. 1st, 1896.

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